

We probably don't want Rec

And why our Medical scheme with Decrim is probably a better option

Ref: <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Cannabis-Legalisation-and-Control-Bill-Exposure-Draft-for-Referendum2.pdf>

Chill Division - v1.0, March 2025

Kia ora, I'm Josiah

But everyone just calls me Jo, or Chill.

I've been a legacy cultivator since 2020, commercially licensed since 2022, and a regulatory consultant since 2023.

I help small to medium startups navigate their way through the hoops of getting a Medicinal Cannabis licence, usually for Cultivation but also Supply.

I'm an advocate for decrim, home-grows, but also for following the rules and regulations as they are at present despite how much we'd all tweak them in some way.



How it's laid out

There are two columns, one for the proposed (rejected) Cannabis Legalisation & Control Bill 2020. The other side is our Medicinal Cannabis Scheme.

Bullet points are laid out side-by-side, horizontally aligned for easy comparison.

Each bullet-point is colored based on which side is the most restrictive / permissive, with **red** being strictest, **orange** a tie, and **green** most permissive.

Although our current scheme is far from perfect, this should highlight how much better it is (by and large) than the common cry “give me adult-use Rec”.

Possession

Proposed legalization

- Up to 14g on your person in-public.
- Can have up to two plants per-adult or up to 4 plants per-household.
- Up to 14g may be purchased per-day, possibly requiring multiple trips per-week for some users in-person.

Current Medicinal scheme

- Uncapped amount on your person in-public.
- No home cultivation is permitted under the Medicinal scheme.
- Uncapped “daily” purchase limit, can be prescribed a months worth of product and dispensed all at once, couriered or in-person.

Obtaining cannabis

Proposed legalization

- Must be purchased from an approved and licensed business.
- *Must* be purchased in-person.
- Sharing with friends up to 14g per-day but cannot be sold to them.
- Not permitted to be shipped through mail.

Current Medicinal scheme

- Must be obtained through prescription from a doctor / clinic.
- Can be ordered either in-person or online.
- Sharing constitutes “Dealing in controlled drugs” and is not permitted.
- Most prescriptions are couriered.

Product restrictions

Proposed legalization

- Must be < 15% THC for home-grows.
- Commercial products THC limit to be set by a Cannabis Regulatory Authority.
- Limits to type of product (eating / vaping).
- Packages may not contain more than 14g of dried flower.
- Approval needed for all products pre-sale.

Current Medicinal scheme

- Home-grows are not permitted.
- No limit to the potency of the active ingredient in NZMQS verified medicines.
- Many options from Ph.Eur 11th Ed.
- Uncapped weight limit for individual pack size, with 30g bags being common.
- Approval needed for all products pre-sale.

Taxes / fees

Proposed legalization

- Excise tax per-gram, higher tax for higher active ingredient levels, handled at retail.
- Additional “harm reduction” levy set per-product.
- Monthly / annual licensing fees for operating a business, varying based on semi-regular reviews from a Cannabis Regulatory Authority, estimated high tens of thousands of dollars, if not hundreds.

Current Medicinal scheme

- No additional tax on any product outside of the usual GST.
- No additional levies on any NZMQS verified products.
- Annual licence fee of approx \$8.3k for a Cultivation licence, with the scheme operating on a “cost recovery” basis meaning minimal fees for both annual licensing and / or product registration.

Consumption

Proposed legalization

- Cannot be consumed in-public.
- Cannot be consumed in regular designated smoking areas.
- Illegal to expose anybody under the age of 20 to second-hand smoke or vape.
- Authority directive is to decrease consumption over time.

Current Medicinal scheme

- *May* be consumed in-public.
- Can be consumed in regular designated smoking areas.
- Under 20s may also be prescribed their own cannabis in some situations.
- No legislatively defined directive regarding product consumption.

Businesses

Proposed legalization

- Public consultation required for any and all businesses being set up in the area, similar to alcohol stores.
- Licenses required for consumption lounges and any other retail businesses.
- Restrictions on advertising both business and products.

Current Medicinal scheme

- No consultation required with the public when setting up a location with a Medicinal Cannabis License Activity specified.
- No license required for a consumption lounge. All pharmacies may dispense etc.
- Business as a whole may be advertised, specific products cannot.

“This is why we continue to advocate for decriminalization, and for home-grows. It’s the best of both worlds.”



- Josiah, Chill Division

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